

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 00515 241408Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15  
IO-14 TRSE-00 AID-05 EB-08 /097 W  
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R 241211Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8301  
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMEMBASSY MBABANE  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMCONSUL DURBAN  
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
USMISSION UN NEW YORK

UNCLAS MASERU 0515

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, LT, SF (TRANSKEI)  
SUBJECT: LESOTHO-TRANSKEI BORDER PROBLEMS

REF: DURBAN 0128,

1. HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS IN MASERU WERE CONVOKED BY  
ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER KOTSOKOANE, MORNING OF FEBRUARY 23.  
FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO TO KURT WALDHEIM,  
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS, WAS  
DISTRIBUTED AND DISCUSSED.

2. QTE IN CONTRAVENTION OF EXISTING TRADE, CUSTOMS, LABOUR AND  
TRAVEL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA, IN  
PARTICULAR THE LABOUR AGREEMENT OF 1973, WHICH NAMES FIFTEEN  
POINTS OF ENTRY BETWEEN THE TWO STATES, SOUTH AFRICA HAS UNI-  
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PAGE 02 MASERU 00515 241408Z

LATERALLY BLOCKADED THE SOUTH-EASTERN BORDER OF LESOTHO, WHICH  
ABUTS ON THAT PART OF SOUTH AFRICA CALLED THE TRANSKEI.

SINCE FRIDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1978 THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES,  
THROUGH THEIR TRANSKEIAN MINIONS, HAVE DEMANDED VISAS AT A COST  
OF R2.50 EACH FROM LESOTHO CITIZENS TRAVELLING THROUGH THE  
TRANSKEI EN ROUTE TO DESTINATIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA.

THIS WEEK, THE SITUATION WORSENER WHEN INTERNATIONAL PASSPORTS, AS DISTINCT FROM AGREED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, WERE DEMANDED BY SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIALS AT RAMATS'ELISO'S, QACHA'S NEK AND TELE BORDER POSTS. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS DEMAND ARE OBVIOUS, NAMELY, TACIT RECOGNITION OF THE TRANSKEI BANTUSTAN.

THE NET EFFECT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S INSIDIOUS MOVES IS THE COMPLETE STOPPAGE OF ALL MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PERSONS, IN BOTH DIRECTIONS, THROUGH THE BORDER POSTS ALREADY MENTIONED. TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, THE SOUTH-EASTERN BORDER OF LESOTHO IS SEALED. DURING THE PAST WEEK, THOUSANDS OF BASOTHO, WHO NORMALLY TRAVEL THROUGH THE TRANSKEI TO OTHER PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA, HAVE BEEN STRANDED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER. THE REFUSAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT LESOTHO CITIZENS TO RETURN TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY IS A GROSS VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED NORMS. FACED WITH A SITUATION WHICH THREATENS HER INTEGRITY AND STABILITY, AND IN LINE WITH HER KNOWN STAND AGAINST APARTHEID, IN COMPLIANCE WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 31/6, LESOTHO IS MOBILIZING HER PEOPLE AND MEAGRE RESOURCES TO WITHSTAND THIS LATEST MOVE AGAINST HER BY THE RACIST SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME. SPECIFICALLY, THE FOLLOWING ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERING OF OUR PEOPLE:-

1. R1,000,000 HAS BEEN DIVERTED FOR THE IMMEDIATE CONSTRUCTION OF A WHOLESALE FACILITY AT QACHA'S NEK AND CAPITALISATION OF THE LESOTHO NATIONAL BUS SERVICE.

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PAGE 03 MASERU 00515 241408Z

2. A BUS SERVICE BETWEEN QACHA'S NEK AND QUTHING IS TO BE LAUNCHED IMMEDIATELY. WITH 1 ABOVE, THIS ACTION IS INTENDED TO REDUCE THE EFFECT OF THE BLOCKADE.

3. ADDITIONAL HEALTH FACILITIES, IN THE FORM OF STAFF AND MEDICINES, ARE BEING DIVERTED TO QACHA'S NEK AND OTHER AFFECTED AREAS.

4. SELF-HELP PROJECTS ARE BEING INCREASED AND INTENSIFIED IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOOD AND EMPLOYMENT.

5. CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS IS BEING ACCELERATED. THIS APPLIES TO ACCESS ROADS AND RIVER CROSSINGS AS WELL.

6. EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES ARE BEING SENT TO THE AFFECTED AREAS.

LESOTHO IS IN A STATE OF SIEGE AND THEREFORE NEEDS INTERNATIONAL MORAL SUPPORT AND MATERIAL ASSISTANCE. HEW OWN EFFORTS AND RESOURCES ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO COPE WITH THE EMERGENCY IMPOSED UPON HER BY PRETORIA. AS THE SECURITY COUNCIL IS ALREADY SEIZED WITH THE PROBLEM OF OUR SOUTH-EASTERN BORDER WITH SOUTH AFRICA, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 402, YOU ARE KINDLY REQUESTED TO

MARSHAL INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT ON OUR BEHALF AND TO IMMEDIATELY  
DISPATCH A FACT-FINDING MISSION TO LESOTHO. IF POSSIBLE, SUCH A  
MISSION SHOULD INCLUDE AN INTERNATIONAL LAWYER WITH SPECIAL  
KNOWLEDGE OF BOUNDARY DISPUTES AND/OR TRANSIT RIGHTS AND  
OBLIGATIONS. WE APPEAL TO YOUR EXCELLENCY TO COME TO OUR RESCUE  
AT THIS HOUR OF CRISIS. BECAUSE OF HER INTERNAL PROBLEMS AND HER  
TARNISHED INTERNATIONAL IMAGE, SOUTH AFRICA IS DELIBERATELY,  
IF NOT MALICIOUSLY, VENTING HER SPLEEN ON US. WE NEED  
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO SURVIVE. UNQTE.

3. COMMENTS WILL FOLLOW REFTEL.  
STOKES

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, MIGRATORY WORKERS, BORDER INCIDENTS, TRANSKEI  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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